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Department of State

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59-H 770004-1901

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Action

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Rec'd:

AUGUST 15, 1961

7:44 PM

EUR

Info

FROM: BERLIN

TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 210, AUGUST 15, 10 PM (SECTION ONE OF TWO)

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 6/29/77

PER Shedding OFFICE Dur

PRIORITY

FADRC FOI CASE NO. 710567 Cited

ACTION DEPARTMENT 210, BONN PRIORITY 183; INFORMATION OF BONN 122, PARIS 128, MOSCOW 117, POLAD USAREUR 113

PARIS FOR EMB, USRO, STOESSEL, AND MCGUIRE.

FOLLOWING IS ROUNDUP BERLIN SITUATION AUG 15:

1. EAST BERLIN: MISSION OFFICERS OBSERVED EARLY AFTERNOON REDUCTION OF SIZE OF SECURITY FORCES, ESPECIALLY KAMPFGRUPPEN, AT ALL CROSSING POINTS. SEVERAL PLATOONS OF KAMPFGRUPPEN, HOWEVER, WERE NOTED MOVING TOWARD BRANDENBURG GATE AROUND FACTORY CLOSING TIME, POSSIBLY TO CONTROL CROWDS WHICH MIGHT CONGREGATE AT THAT HOUR. EXCEPT FOR SMALL CROWD HELD BACK BY VOPO'S THREE BLOCKS FROM GATE, ONLY SCATTERED SMALL GROUPS OF PEOPLE NOTED NEAR OTHER CROSSING POINTS. MILITARY DISPOSITIONS IN CENTER OF CITY ALSO REDUCED THOUGH TANKS AND ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS STILL PRESENT NEAR GOVERNMENT QUARTERS; LARGE NUMBER OF TRUCKS HAVE LEFT CENTER OF CITY. THERE MUCH LESS EVIDENCE OF MILITARY MOVEMENTS IN OTHER PARTS OF EAST BERLIN. NUMBER OF POLICE AT FRIEDRICHSTRASSE S-BAHN STATION ALSO GREATLY REDUCED.

BRANDENBURG GATE STILL CLOSED TO VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC AS RESULT OF AUG 15 ORDINANCE REQUIRING PERMIT FOR WEST BERLIN VEHICLES ENTERING EAST BERLIN (BERLIN'S 173 BONN, 200 DEPT), VERY FEW WEST BERLIN CARS OBSERVED IN EAST BERLIN; SOME WERE ABLE TO ENTER, REPORTEDLY AFTER HAVING OBTAINED PERMITS.

ALLIED VEHICLE CONTINUE TO PASS UNDISTURBED AT CROSSING POINTS.

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BUT ARE PREVENTED FROM APPROACHING ANY OF RECENTLY CLOSED CROSSING POINTS. WEST BERLIN PRESS REPORTED THAT SEVERAL BRITISH OFFICERS PREVENTED FROM ENTERING EAST SECTOR, BUT BRITISH INFORM US THEY WERE TRYING TO ENTER AT BRANDENBURG GATE AS IT WAS ABOUT TO BE CLOSED AND WERE THEREFORE NOT SUBJECT TO SPECIAL DISCRIMINATION.

ULBRICHT QUOTED IN EAST BERLIN TELECAST TO UNIT OF SOVZONE ARMY AT SECTOR BORDER AS SAYING, "AFTER EVERYTHING HERE HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT WITH SUCH PRECISION, DOUBT CAN NO LONGER EXIST ABOUT SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF STATE APPARATUS."

2. REFUGEES: REFUGEE SITUATION UNCLEAR DUE TO CONTINUED REGISTRATION OF BACKLOG AT MARIENFELDE. PRESS REPORTS REFUGEES STILL MANAGING TO GET ACROSS BY SAME METHODS DESCRIBED YESTERDAY'S SUMMARY, BUT NUMBERS CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED. WEST BERLIN POLICE REPORTS THAT VOPO AND KAMFFORUPPEN CONTROLS ALONG SECTOR CANALS HAVE BEEN SHARPLY INCREASED TO BLOCK THIS MEANS OF ESCAPE BY REFUGEES.

3. WEST BERLIN: FEELING IN BERLIN SENAT CIRCLES IS THAT PROVERBIAL CALM OF WEST BERLIN POPULATION HAS GIVEN WAY, PERHAPS FOR FIRST TIME IN POSTWAR PERIOD, TO CONSIDERABLE NERVOUS TENSION. SOME INSTANCES OF PANIC BUYING HAVE BEEN REPORTED; CITY OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN QUERIED BY PEOPLE WHETHER THEY SHOULD CARRY OUT SUCH PLANS AS GOING ON VACAT ON-OR-WHETHER THEY SHOULD MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR LEAVING CITY. POPULATION NOT AFRAID, BUT EXCITED AND UNCERTAIN RE FUTURE. POLITICAL LEADERS FEAR THAT "CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE" MAY DEVELOP AS RESULT OF UNFULFILLED EXPECTATIONS OF WESTERN COUNTERMEASURES.

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ACTION DEPARTMENT 210, BONN PRIORITY 183; INFORMATION LONDON 122,
PARIS 128, MOSCOW 117, POLAD USAREUR 113

PARIS FOR EMB, USRO, STOESSEL, AND MCGUIRE.

PUBLIC RALLY SCHEDULED FOR TOMORROW (BERLIN'S 176 BONN, 203
DEPT) DESIGNED NOT ONLY TO PERMIT POPULATION TO LET OFF STEAM
BUT ALSO TO HAVE BENEFICIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT ON BERLINERS
IN RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN LEADERSHIP. DESPITE TRADE UNION
COMPLAINTS THAT SQUARE TOO SMALL TO HOLD ANTICIPATED CROWDS, ALL
SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS AGREED THAT CITY HALL IS APPROPRIATE
PLACE FOR RALLY. POLICE MAKING FULL PREPARATIONS TO CONTROL
POSSIBLE MOVEMENTS TOWARD SECTOR BORDERS.

IN ADDITION TO ACTIONS FORESHADOWED BY BRANDT IN YESTERDAY'S
SPEECH AT CITY HALL WHICH WERE FURTHER CONSIDERED AT TODAY'S
SENAT SESSION, SENAT HAS REQUESTED CANCELLATION OF BERT
BRECHT PLAY SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER OPENING. SENAT MEASURES
CONTEMPLATED AGAINST SED PAPER WAHRHEIT BECAME UNNECESSARY
AS RESULT OF ACTION TAKEN BY WORKERS AT PRINTING PLANT
WHO WALKED OUT ON HEARING THAT EAST BERLIN RESIDENTS EMPLOYED
AT PLANT (MAINLY COMMUNISTS OR SYMPATHIZERS) WERE ABOUT TO
ARRIVE. POLICE THEN PREVENTED EAST BERLINERS FROM ENTERING
BUILDING AND ADVISED THEM RETURN TO EAST SECTOR FOR OWN SAFETY.
WE UNDERSTAND THIS ACTION NOT ENTIRELY SPONTANEOUS BUT INSTIGATED
BY INTERIOR SENATOR LIPSCHITZ. THERE INDICATIONS SENAT MAY SOLVE
QUESTION OF SED OFFICES IN WEST BERLIN IN SIMILAR MANNER WITHOUT
NECESSITATING ACTION BY WEST BERLIN AUTHORITIES.

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SPD ORGANIZATION IN EAST BERLIN HAS BEEN RELEASED FROM PARTY DISCIPLINE AND LOYALTY BY BERLIN SPD HEADQUARTERS; SOVSECTOR SPD MEMBERS WERE ADVISED TO DO WHATEVER NECESSARY IN INTEREST THEIR OWN SAFETY.

KREUZBERG DISTRICT MAYOR KRESSMANN REPORTEDLY BECAME FIRST WEST BERLINER NOT CONSIDERED "PEACEFUL" ENOUGH TO BE PERMITTED ENTER SOVSECTOR; HE HAD INTENDED GO TO EAST BERLIN TO DELIVER TO BORDER-CROSSERS EMPLOYED IN HIS DISTRICT WAGE EQUALIZATION FUND EAST MARKS, SINCE THEY UNABLE COLLECT WAGES IN WEST.

POLICE CHECK OF ALL CARS WITH SOVSECTOR OR ZONE LICENSES ENTERING WEST BERLIN HAS REVEALED THAT ABOUT 90 PERCENT WERE DOCTORS AND REMAINDER GDR OFFICIALS OR STATE GUESTS.

BRANDENBURG GATE AND POTSDAMER PLATZ AREA CONTINUE AS MOST CRITICAL POINTS REQUIRING POLICE ATTENTION. LARGE NUMBERS OF WEST POLICE HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED, AND POLICE HAS CLEARED A "BUFFER ZONE" IN APPROACHES TO BRANDENBURG GATE AND AROUND SOV WAR MEMORIAL. AS OF 8 A.M. TODAY, WEST BERLIN POLICE WERE FULLY MOBILIZED WITH ALL FORCES ON 24-HOUR OPERATIONAL BASIS. SPECIAL COMPANIES AVAILABLE AT STRATEGIC POINTS. POLICE HAS ERECTED TEMPORARY BARRIERS TO CONTAIN ACTIVITIES OF JUVENILES BOOING AND THROWING ROCKS AT VOPO'S WHICH HAVE CAUSED DIFFICULTIES.

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